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ABSTRACT

This paper reports the results of a June and July 1985 study in which all 12 libraries where Maine state documents are deposited and the two libraries which receive weekly shipping lists and any extra copies of documents were visited. Observations from these visits are reported in general sections of this report: Examples of Attempts to Increase Accessibility; Examples of Current Innovative Projects; Document Users; Common Problems; Most Popular Subjects Searched in Documents; and Least Popular Documents. Suggestions received for improvement of the Maine State Library are also reported. Recommendations to be made to State Library administration as a result of the visits include: (1) institution of a formal, written agreement to be entered into between the State Library and each depository which requires certain minimum standards to be applied to state document collections; (2) re-examination of the concentration of depositories in the central region with the purpose of reassigning depository status from one of these to a library in York County; and (3) reduction of the number of state depositories with those eliminated becoming partial depositories. A copy of the questionnaire, results of the survey, and a directory of Maine State Documents Depository Libraries are included. (THC)

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Barbara Smith
August 1985

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Status of Maine State Documents Depository Libraries - 1985

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During June and July 1985, Elaine Stanley and I visited all twelve of the libraries where state documents are deposited as well as the two libraries which receive our weekly shipping list and any extra copies of documents. We were profoundly impressed by the cordiality and spirit of cooperation with which we were received. In every library, state documents are recognized as a valuable and integral part of the collection. In spite of the universal problems of limited staff time and financial resources, we found ingenuity, innovation and, especially, concern with providing state government information to the libraries' constituents and communities. Without exception, we were asked to offer suggestions for improvement, to share methods used by other libraries and to include them in any cooperative projects.

While the commitment to documents is shared in common, each library has its own distinct identity. We made a number of observations which are not covered in the questionnaire results to follow but which are worth reporting:

<u>Examples of Attempts to Increase Accessibility</u>

-A section devoted to state documents in printed guides

-Highlighting state documents in library tours

-State documents displayed attractively in prominent areas

-Cross-referencing agency name changes in the public catalog

-Providing the history of state agencies on cards in the public catalog

--In-house binding so that all documents are in hard covers

--Commercially binding the more physically substantial documents

--Cards in public catalog directing user to vertical files

--Notebook containing <u>Checklist</u> and shipping lists, with document number indicated, kept at Reference Desk

<u>Examples of Current Innovative Projects</u>

--Direct routing to faculty of previous newsletters when current one arrives

--Detailed classification scheme being put on word processor to generate list for the public

--Documents used as reading material in tutoring adult readers

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Document Users

--Librarians (to answer reference questions)

--Faculty

--Students

--Community

--Newspaper reporters

--Lawyers

Common Problems

--Not enough staff, money, time or space

--Name authority for agencies

--Determining which documents are continuations

--Acquisition of all state documents

Most Popular Subjects Searched in Documents

--Statistics (Labor Dept. and State Planning Office)

--Human Services

--Conservation

--Forestry

--Fisheries

--Education

--Crime

Least Popular Documents

--Technical reports such as those from Department of Transportation

--Monthly financial statements

We also solicited comments about Maine State Library and were certainly gratified to hear that the depositories were pleased with the service they were receiving. However, these suggestions for improvement were made:

--More attention be placed on the acquisition of state documents by contacting agencies each year when the annual report is published

--Legislation be re-drafted to include non-print as well as print sources

--Legislation be re-drafted to contain a penalty for noncompliance

--Compile subject index to documents

--Highlight new continuations, continuation cessations and important documents on the shipping list

--Permit depositories to select agencies they wish to receive

--Initiate a "Needs and Offers" list

--Establish a name authority file

--Catalog all documents as soon as possible

Some of the suggestions are more feasible than others because State Library suffers from the same staff and money limitations as do the depositories. However, all suggestions will be explored and, consequently, discussed at the Depository quarterly meetings before any action is taken to implement them.

Prior to this summer's visits and as a result of the meetings at MLA and State Library, the consensus seemed to be that some sort of cataloging venture should be the priority for cooperation in order to get the current documents cataloged as soon as possible. The discussions with individual librarians do not lead us to the same conclusion since the current documents are being cataloged in a timely manner. There is a definite need for catalogers to have an opportunity to "talk to each other" which we hope can be met through MLA. Other areas of cooperation with regard to state documents should be explored after all depositories have had an opportunity to review this report and to make comments. This report will be the agenda at the next meeting of depository librarians.

There are three recommendations, however, which we will be making to State Library administration as a result of our visits and observations:

1. That a formal, written agreement be entered into between State Library and each depository which requires certain minimum standards to be applied to the state document collection.

2. That the concentration of depositories in the Central region be re-examined with the purpose of re-assigning depository status from one of these to a library in York County which is not now served.

3. That the number of state depositories be reduced and those eliminated become partial depositories (similar to Bangor and Auburn Public Libraries), continuing to receive the weekly shipping list which they may use as an acquisition tool.

Following are the results of the questionnaire. Even those questions which could be answered yes or no frequently had explanatory notes which we tried to accomodate with footnotes. These yes/no questions are separated from the narrative questions in order to present the data in a more easily comparable summary form. The numbers correspond to the numbers on the questionnaire.

	Yes	No	Maine State Library
3. Receive documents from other sources[1].	7	5	Yes
6. Keep all documents[2].	9	3	Yes
8. Regular weeding schedule[3].	7	5	No
9. Reference librarians review documents	11	1	No
11. Cataloger participates in reference duty	7	5	No
14. Retrospective cataloging projects[4].	4	8	Yes
15. Catalog on OCLC	8	4	Yes
19. Statistics on state document use[5].	2	10	Yes

Footnotes:

1. Many of the state depositories are Census affiliates and receive some duplicates in that role. Several subscribe to certain periodicals or receive publications because of membership in an organization or as gifts from legislators. One library surveys every state agency each year to request those publications not received from Maine State Library.

2. A strict yes/no interpretation of this question is impossible. If libraries make only a few exceptions, they are listed in the yes column.

3. Libraries regularly weed documents in their vertical files; cataloged documents integrated into collections are kept indefinitely.

4. Projects include putting collections into OCLC data base and reclassification projects.

5. One library indicates that 1 1/2% of reference questions are answered with state documents. The other library tallied 878 users of state documents. Both statistics are for one year. (Maine State Library will have use statistics beginning with April 1985.)

Questionnaire (continued)

1. A list of all libraries is appended.

2. There are no written agreements with any of the libraries. A few of the librarians have personal knowledge of when they began to receive documents.

4. Staff time devoted to documents (not including retrospective projects or work-study students)

	Processing		Cataloging	
	Number of Staff	Percentage of Time	Number of Staff	Percentage of Time
	2	2%	1	3-4%
	1	3%	1	3%
	1	4%	1	25-50%
	2	less than 5%	2	less than 5%
	1,	less than 10%	1	less than 10%
	1	25%	2	20%
	2	less than 10%	1	less than 5%
	1	5%	1	10%
	2	1%	1	½%
	1	25%	1	25%
	2	less than 10%	1	1%
	2	3%	1	3%
Maine State Library	1	50%	1	20%

5. Libraries answered that documents were received ither on Friday or Monday or that the date varied.

7. Length of time documents kept:

Permanently/Indefinitely	3 years	5 years	Varies
6	1	1	4

(Maine State Library retains all documents permanently.)

10. Decision to catalog documents involves reference librarians in every library except where documents are maintained in a special collection, in which case, the Special Collections librarians are directly involved.

12. Authority control for names of agencies:

OCLC	Annual Report	Other
5	4	6

(Numbers add to more than 12 because libraries have more than one source. "Other" refers to in-house files kept by individual libraries.)

(Maine State Library uses both OCLC and the Annual Report.)

13. Type of classification system used:

LC	Dewey	Kirkwood Modification of SuDocs	Subject Headings	Unique
8	3	4	4	1

(Numbers add to more than 12 because many libraries handle cataloged and non-cataloged documents differently.)

(Maine State Library uses a variation on the SuDocs system.)

16.

Open Stacks	Closed Stacks	Circulating (incl. VF)	Reference
11	1	11	10

(Special collections at two libraries circulate; at one library, they do not.)

(Maine State Library has closed document stacks; there are both circulating and reference copies.)

17. Lending policies:

Consistent with other lending policies	Not loaned
11	1

(Maine State Library lends documents consistent with its other lending policies.)

18. Use of Government Publications Checklist:

At Reference Desk	In Processing/Cataloging	None
2	5	7

(Numbers add to more than 12 because several libraries use Checklist in both ways.)

(Maine State Library keeps Checklist at the Reference Desk.)

20. Comments:

"The two meetings we have had on the cataloging of Maine documents have been very useful to me personally. I feel very enthusiastic about the whole situation and am enjoying cataloging Maine documents more than I ever have."

"As soon as the government documents are received we like to try to take care of them."

"Think visits to all the depositories was an extremely valuable experience for us.... Many questions were asked and answered, others posed where cooperative efforts in future may provide the answer. I look forward to subsequent opportunities to meet with others working with state documents."

To all those who took time from their busy schedules--Library Directors, Reference Librarians, Catalogers--thank you for meeting with us and replying to our questionnaires. Not only did we enjoy the personal contact, but we were also impressed by your infectious enthusiasm and impeccable professionalism. We came back to our documents work enriched and excited about the future for Maine State Documents.

Barbara J. Smith
Documents Librarian
Maine State Library
Station 64
Augusta, ME 04333

MAINE STATE DOCUMENTS DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES

Depository	Contact Person
Ladd Library Bates College Lewiston 04240	Mary Atchison 786-6274 Renee Phelan 786-6271
Bowdoin College Library Brunswick 04011	Elda Takagi 725-8731 Ext. 298
Miller Library Colby College Waterville 04901	John Likins 872-3289
Maine State Law & Legislative Reference Library Station 43 Augusta 04333	Rita Bouchard 289-1600
Maine State Library Station 64 Augusta 04333	Barbara Smith or Elaine Stanley 289-3561
Portland Public Library 5 Monument Square Portland 04101	Edith McCauley 773-4761 Ext. 314
Mantor Library University of Maine at Farmington Farmington 04938	Sheila Bearor 778-3501 Ext. 341 Shirley Martin 778-3501 Ext. 342
Blake Library University of Maine at Fort Kent 22 Pleasant St. Fort Kent 04743	Kathy Ottney or Marcel Pittet 834-3162 Ext. 214
Merrill Library University of Maine at Machias Machias 04654	Katherine Alley 255-3313 Ext. 234
Fogler Library University of Maine at Orono Orono 04473	Betsey Paradis 581-1687

University of Maine at Presque Isle 181 Main St. Presque Isle 04769	Virginia Fischer 764-0311 Ext. 293
University of Southern Maine College Avenue Gorham 04038	Franklin Talbot 780-5344
University of Southern Maine 96 Falmouth Street Portland 04103	Marjorie Duval 780-4275

Partial Depository	Contact Person
Auburn Public Library Court St. Auburn 04210	Lois Wagner 782-3191 Ext. 71
Bangor Public Library 145 Harlow Bangor 04401	Susan Wight 947-8336

MAINE STATE DOCUMENTS DEPOSITORY LIBRARY

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please feel free to continue answers on to another sheet.

1. Name of contact person for state documents, phone number and extension.

2. Do you know how and when your library became a state depository?

3. Do you receive state documents from any source other than the Maine State Library (i. e., subscriptions, gifts, etc.)? If so, name the source(s).

4. How many staff members devote at least part of their time to state documents?

	Number	Amount of Time (%)
Processing		
Cataloging		

5. On what day do you receive the documents each week? (We usually ship on Thursday or Friday.)

6. Do you keep all documents as they are received? If no, which do you keep? What do you do with those not kept?

7. How long do you keep the documents?

8. Do you have a weeding formula or schedule? If so, please detail.

9. Do the reference librarians review the documents?

10. Who decides which documents to catalog?

11. Does the person who catalogs your state documents also perform any reference duties? If not, does he/she consult reference librarians?

12. What do you use for authority control (in determining names of agencies or departments)?

13. What kind of classification system do you use? If it is unique to your library, please attach a copy.

14. Are you in the process of any retrospective cataloging projects? If yes, please detail.

15. Do you catalog on OCLC?

16. Are documents shelved in open or closed stacks? Are they integrated into any collections, e. g., reference area?

17. What are your lending and ILL policies for state documents? What is the volume of documents loaned?

18. How do you make use of the Government Publications Checklist?

19. Do you keep statistics on state document use? If yes, please share the past year's statistics with us. (Please specify the exact time period covered. A summary is fine.)

20. Comments.